

NEWS

From the Office of

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Mitzelfelt, Sheriff Join State to Unveil New Communications Vehicle

SAN BERNARDINO – First District Supervisor Brad Mitzelfelt joined County Sheriff Rod Hoops and the Secretary of the California Emergency Management Agency today in announcing the deployment of a vehicle that will allow multiple agencies to communicate with each other during disasters or other emergencies.

“A common problem during large disasters is that agencies from different locations often have trouble communicating with each other because they have different radio types and protocols,” said Supervisor Mitzelfelt. “This will allow emergency personnel to communicate across those barriers and will improve their ability to respond more effectively to better protect the public.”

The Mobile Interoperability Gateway Unit resembles a high-tech camper shell, topped by a satellite dish, mounted on a Ford F-350 pick-up truck. It will enable personnel from one agency to communicate with any other agency. For example, a radio on one frequency or band is able to communicate with a radio from a separate agency on a different frequency when they are routed through the switches inside the unit. The dish also links to the state’s Operational Area Satellite Information System (OASIS), which provides reliable long-range communication, Internet access and even videoconferencing capability.

The unit was funded through a U.S. Department of Homeland Security Urban Area Security Initiative grant of approximately \$234,000 and a Law Enforcement Terrorism Prevention Program grant of approximately \$41,700. The unit is one of six in California and will be based at the San Bernardino County Sheriff’s office, but will be available for deployment to five other counties, including Riverside, San Diego, Imperial, Mono and Inyo.

During a press conference at the Sheriff’s headquarters today, California Emergency Management Agency Secretary Matthew Bettenhausen praised Supervisor Mitzelfelt for his long commitment to disaster preparedness. The press conference was beamed live to the governor’s office through the unit.

Supervisor Mitzelfelt noted that this region has extensive experience in dealing with disasters and thanked all emergency responders and the thousands of volunteers who step forward when needed.

“This is another example of the outstanding cooperation and foresight our emergency planners have demonstrated throughout the years,” said Supervisor Mitzelfelt.